1:Heckewelder M-5 (ca. 1800)1819
NM7 Delaware NM7

and due allowance, of the hardships attendant on savage life. Therefore they are not only voluntarily, but cheerfully submitted to; and as women are not obliged to live with their husbands any longer than suits their pleasure or convenience, it cannot be supposed that they would submit to be loaded with unjust or unequal burdens.

Marriages among the Indians are not, as with us, contracted for life; it is understood on both sides that the parties are not to live together any longer than they shall be pleased with each other. The husband may put away his wife whenever he pleases, and the woman may in like manner abandon her husband. Therefore the connexion is not attended with any vows, promises or ceremonies of any kind. An Indian takes a wife as it were on trial, determined, however, in his own mind not to forsake her if she behaves well, and particularly if he has children by her. The woman, sensible of this, does on her part every thing in her power to please her husband, particularly if he is a good hunter or trapper, capable of maintaining her by his skill and industry, and protecting her by his strength and courage.

When a marriage takes place, the duties and labours incumbent on each party are well known to both. It is understood that the husband is to build a house for them to dwell in, to find the necessary implements of husbandry, as axes, hoes, &c. to provide a canoe, and also dishes, bowls, and other necessary vessels for house-keeping. The woman generally has a kettle or two, and some other articles of kitchen furniture, which she brings with her. The husband, as master of the family, considers himself bound to support it by his bodily exertions, as hunting, trapping, &c.; the woman, as his *help-mate*, takes upon herself the labours of the field, and is far from considering them as more important than those to which her husband is subjected, being well satisfied that with his gun and traps he can maintain a family in any place where game is to be found: nor do they think it any hardship imposed upon them; for they themselves say, that

[P.34, 8]

581 Divorce and family instability were
586 common; many children were raised by
mother surrogates. "Owing to instability
of the family relationship, children are
581 often neglected."[9] The father was absent,
855 hunting, fishing, fighting, trading, or
attending treaties during most of the year;
what discipline there was fell to the hand
of the mother, who was considered to
796 "own" the children.[10] During one of the
861 annual calendar of ceremonies, young
children were chased by a man dressed in
a bear-skin, who threatened to punish them
for misdeeds (of which the parents kept
him informed from year to year) by carry-
ing them away in a bag full of snakes.[11]
[776] This "Mask Spirit" was considered to be
the "Guardian of the Game" and also
promoted the fertility of the corn; in other
words, was the symbol of the food pro-
955 vider.[12] The boys were able to escape from
the mother's supervision as soon as they
were able to get about to play at hunting
and fighting; but the girls were kept around
754 the house to help the mother at work.[13]
When a child died, an old woman was
often accused of having bewitched it.[14]

155 It would seem that the mother-figure
593 remained a symbol of possible delights
which could not be secured on demand, a
symbol of diffused frustration, of withheld
benefits and hidden hostility, to the
Delaware, and the source of his generalized,
if inhibited, aggressiveness; and that the
father-figure stood on the horizon, so to
speak, as a powerful, friendly being, but
one too remote and too aloof to be depended
upon.

Emotional Attachments in Maturity

584 The ideal in marriage was for a young
man to fall in love with a girl. His family
would present his suit; she would accept
[585] him by accepting the presents he sent, and
come to live with him; and they would live
happily and faithfully ever after. The

9. Zeisberger, 1778, p. 21.
10. Zeisberger, 1778, p. 14.
11. Harrington, 1938, pp. 52-53, 113.
12. Ibid.; Harrington, 1921.
13. Zeisberger, 1778, p. 16.
14. Zeisberger, 1778, p. 128.